REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed April 4, 2006, claims 3, 4, 5, 8-10, and 21-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention; claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by either U.S. Patent No. 5,044,181 (issued to Roop et al.; hereinafter "Roop") or U.S. Patent No. 5,657,652 (issued to Martin); and claims 2 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Roop or Martin in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,813,250 (issued to Yeh). The disclosure was objected to for various informalities. Applicant respectfully traverses and request reconsideration.

Regarding claims 3, 4, 5, 8-10, and 21-29, Applicant has amended claims 3, 4, 21, and 29 as noted above. The amendments to claims 3 and 4 reflect that each C-shaped clamp is, in general, a bushing, as verified in paragraph [0027], lines 1-3. The amendments to claims 21 and 29 correctly describe the operation of the cam with respect to the follower member. Paragraph [0029] of the specification has also been appropriately amended to this effect. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3, 4, 5, 8-10, and 21-29 are in condition for allowance.

As to claim 1, Applicant respectfully notes that neither Roop nor Martin teach the use of a casing that engages a first object with a second object. Applicant's casing contains a top engagement portion and a bottom engagement portion to firmly engage, for example, the top and bottom of a gun case which is to be locked (paragraph [0022], lines 1-4). Cited item 78 in Roop is a cam support cage which is mounted to the lock's assembly plate and which contains an aperture through which a cam member, item 82, is connected to a cylinder actuator, item 90 (FIG. 1; col. 3, lines 30-40). Cited item 16 in Martin is a bolt housing portion to which, among other things, a main bolt and deadlocking bolt are connected and through which the tailpiece connected to a cylinder plug passes (col. 3, lines 1-10, 56-58). Applicant claims not a casing via

which parts of the lock itself may be connected, but a casing which may engage two objects with one another that are not part of the lock.

Applicant further respectfully submits that neither Roop nor Martin teaches a hooking engagement mechanism securely mounted on the control knob assembly to secure the control knob assembly to the casing, as claimed. Roop teaches that a cylinder actuator on one side of a cam support cage connects to lugs that are within the cam member on the other side by simply "contacting" them (col. 3, lines 37-38). Applicant claims and describes a distinctly secure mounting of a hooking engagement mechanism on a control knob assembly, utilizing paired bushings and grooves, specialized receiving portions on the control knob for particular portions of the hooking engagement mechanism, etc. (paragraphs [0027] – [0031]). Furthermore, Martin does not teach a hooking engagement mechanism at all, but rather two bolts that may extend straight out from a bolt housing portion toward a strike (col. 3, lines 1-10).

With respect to the claim limitation that the hooking engagement mechanism has "a follower member with a follower member aperture defined to receive therein the neck" (i.e., the neck of a control knob assembly), Applicant respectfully notes that the cylinder actuator is the equivalent of the neck in Roop and that it is received in the aperture in the cam member on its way to contacting the lugs. This cam member is not a follower member; in Roop, the locking bolt member (item 58) is the follower member contains the bolts just as Applicant's follower member aperture contains the hook (paragraph [0028], lines 1-2). As to Martin, Applicant respectfully reasserts that no hooking mechanism is taught.

Finally, regarding the claim limitation that the hooking engagement mechanism "has a control plate firmly connected to the neck of the control knob assembly and having a cam formed to abut an inner face defining the follower member aperture so that rotatable movement of the

control knob assembly is able to drive the follower member to move linearly to complete an attachment and detachment with a securing appendage on the second object", Applicant respectfully reasserts the statement above that in Roop, the equivalent of the neck connects to lugs in the cam member. In view of this fact, the circular surface of the cam member could be considered the control plate, but then this control plate could not accurately be described as "having a cam" as required in the claim, because the cam does not reside on it. The cam is only linked to the circular surface of the cam member via an appended cam arm, which is item 84 (FIG. 1; col. 3, lines 25-27). Regarding Martin, Applicant respectfully reasserts that no hooking engagement is taught, and further notes that the cam in Martin does not abut an inner face defining any kind of aperture, but rather protrudes into the bolt housing portion and engages the locking arm and retracting surface as necessary to allow either locking or unlocking (FIGs. 3 and 4; col. 3, lines 36-52).

For the reasons stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Roop nor Martin discloses the claimed limitations, and as such, it is respectfully submitted that this claim is in condition for allowance.

Applicant further respectfully submits that claim 6 is allowable not merely as depending on allowable base claim 1, but also as adding additional novel and non-obvious subject matter. That is, Roop teaches a spring on the cam member (col. 3, lines 25-29), not on a follower member as claimed by Applicant, and Martin teaches springs on the inner ends of the bolts such that the springs are decompressed when the bolts are extended into locking position, and compressed when the bolts are retracted (FIG. 3; col. 3, lines 5-6, lines 10-11), which is the opposite of that taught by Applicant. Furthermore, Martin necessarily teaches away from placing springs on the outer ends of the bolts because Martin's embodiment would not provide

anything to which the loose ends of those springs could be secured, except for the strike itself, and this would be aesthetically unpleasing when the cabinet or drawer was opened. By the nature of Applicant's lock wherein the action of locking involves moving a following member linearly upward and parallel to the lock structure, not outward and away from it, Applicant's invention is able to secure the loose ends of those springs to a part of the lock itself, and thus achieve the claimed characteristics.

As to claim 2, Applicant respectfully submits that this claim is allowable not merely as depending on allowable base claim 1, but also as adding additional novel and non-obvious subject matter. It is respectfully submitted that the cited ball bearing in Yeh is actually a locking pin for an inside lock cylinder. Applicant respectfully cites to FIGs. 5A and 5C and the associated discussion in col. 3, lines 25-31, noting that these figures represent an unlocked state of the inside lock cylinder. Applicant also respectfully cites to FIGs. 5B and 5D and the associated discussion in col. 3, lines 31-45, noting that these figures represent a locked state of the inside lock cylinder. Thus, Yeh does not teach or suggest using ball spring combinations as claimed. For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that a *prima facie* case of obviousness ahs not been established and that this claim is in condition for allowance.

As to claim 7, Applicant respectfully submits that this claim is allowable not merely as depending on allowable base claim 1, but also as adding additional novel and non-obvious subject matter. That is, claim 7 depends directly on allowable claim 2 and adds the same additional subject matter thereto as claim 6 adds to claim 1. As such, Applicant respectfully reasserts the relevant remarks made in response to the rejection of claim 6 and respectfully submits that this claim is in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. The Examiner is invited to contact the below-listed attorney if the Examiner believes that a telephone conference will advance the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: Robert S. Beiser

Robert S. Beiser
Registration No. 28,687

Vedder, Price, Kaufman & Kammholz, P.C.
222 N. LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Phone: (312) 609-7848
Fax: (312) 609-5005